Chapter 34: Ishimura-san's Stalker

PREVIOUSLY ON LA LA LA...

KIRISHIMA-KUN IS APPARENTLY BEING FOLLOWED BY ISHIMURA-SAN'S STALKER.

FILLED WITH DETERMINATION TO PROTECT HIS WIFE, HE DECIDES TO CONFRONT THEM...

HEY, YOU! WHAT DO YOU WANT FROM ME...?!

Jolt

NGH?! WHA...

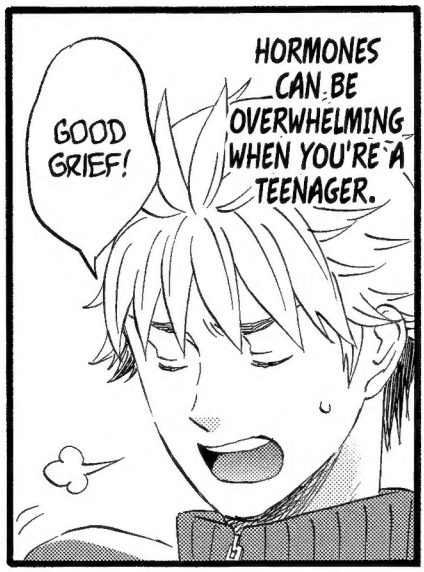
WHAT DO YOU MEAN...?

HM? HE SOUNDS REALLY YOUNG...

Recoil

LOOKING CLOSELY, HIS FACE LOOKS YOUNG AS WELL...

IS THIS GUY IN JUNIOR HIGH...?

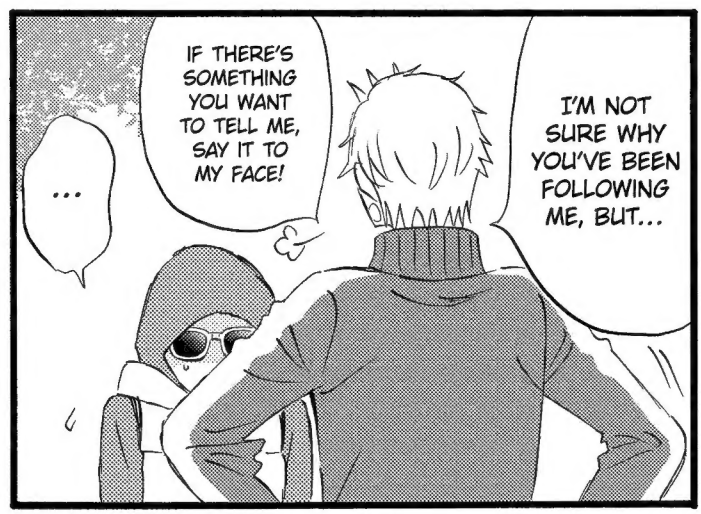

GOOD GRIEF!
HORMONES CAN BE OVERWHELMING WHEN YOU'RE A TEENAGER.

SHE EVEN PULLS IN JUNIOR HIGH KIDS...
WHAT THE HECK? HE'S JUST A KID! MAN, ISHIMURA-SAN'S ATTRACTIVENESS IS POWERFUL...
Hmm...

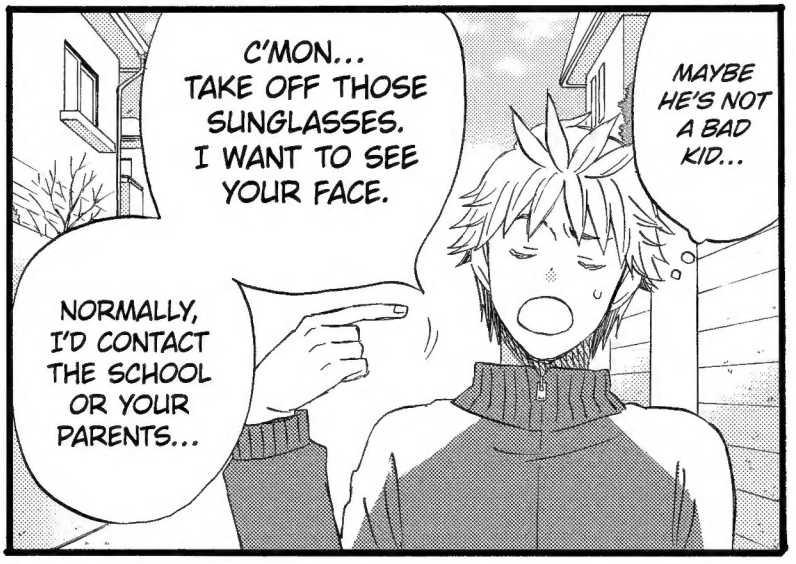
...WHAT?! H-HOW DO YOU KNOW...?!
IT'S ISHIMURA-SAN... RIGHT?

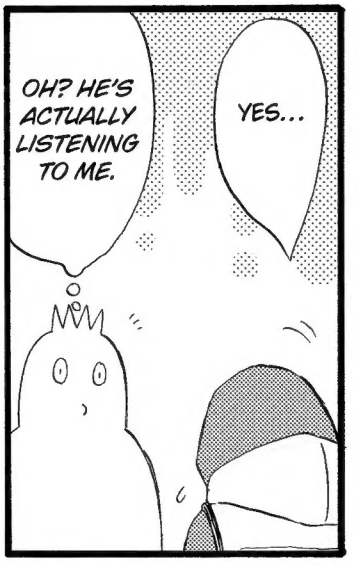
DON'T TRY TO FOOL ME! I KNOW YOU'VE BEEN FOLLOWING ME FOR THE PAST FEW DAYS.
BUT I ALSO KNOW THAT YOUR REAL TARGET ISN'T ME.

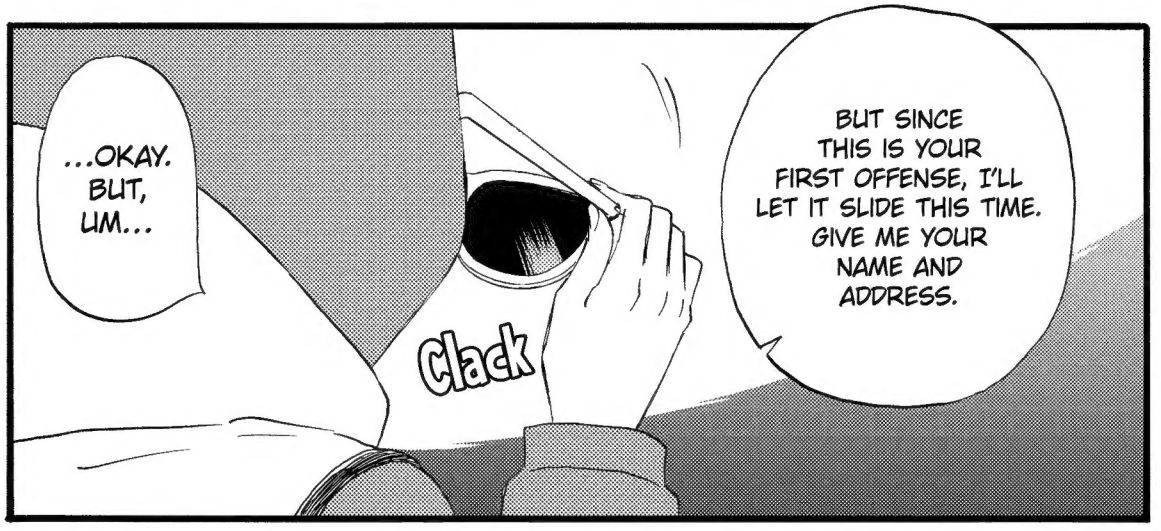
NOT SAYING ANYTHING, HUH?
...


...
IF THERE'S SOMETHING YOU WANT TO TELL ME, SAY IT TO MY FACE!
I'M NOT SURE WHY YOU'VE BEEN FOLLOWING ME, BUT...

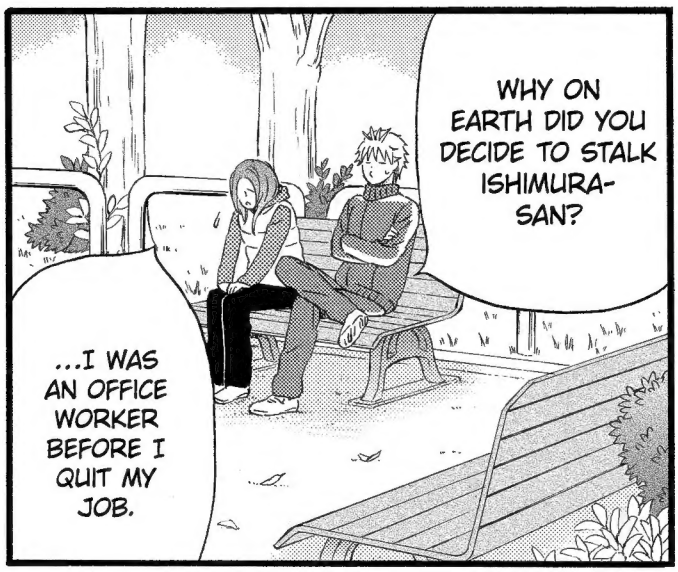
...
"DON'T DO TO OTHERS WHAT YOU DON'T WANT TO BE DONE TO YOU." THAT'S A BASIC RULE IN LIFE.
...LISTEN UP. I'M NOT GOING TO HURT YOU OR REPORT YOU TO THE POLICE, BUT...
IT'S NOT PLEASANT TO HAVE SOMEONE CONSTANTLY WATCHING YOU, UNDERSTAND?


C'MON... TAKE OFF THOSE SUNGLASSES. I WANT TO SEE YOUR FACE.
MAYBE HE'S NOT A BAD KID...
NORMALLY, I'D CONTACT THE SCHOOL OR YOUR PARENTS...

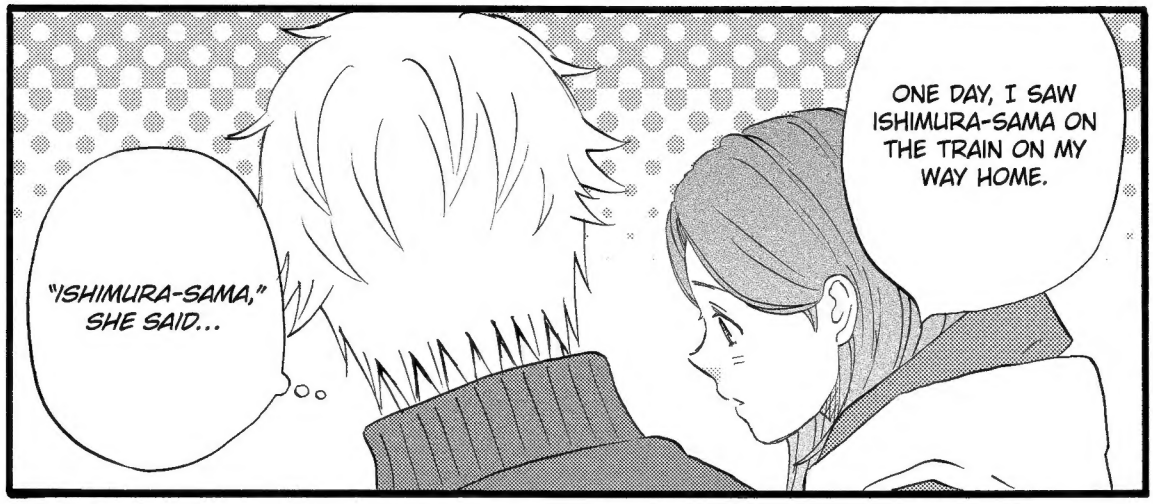

OH? HE'S ACTUALLY LISTENING TO ME.
YES...

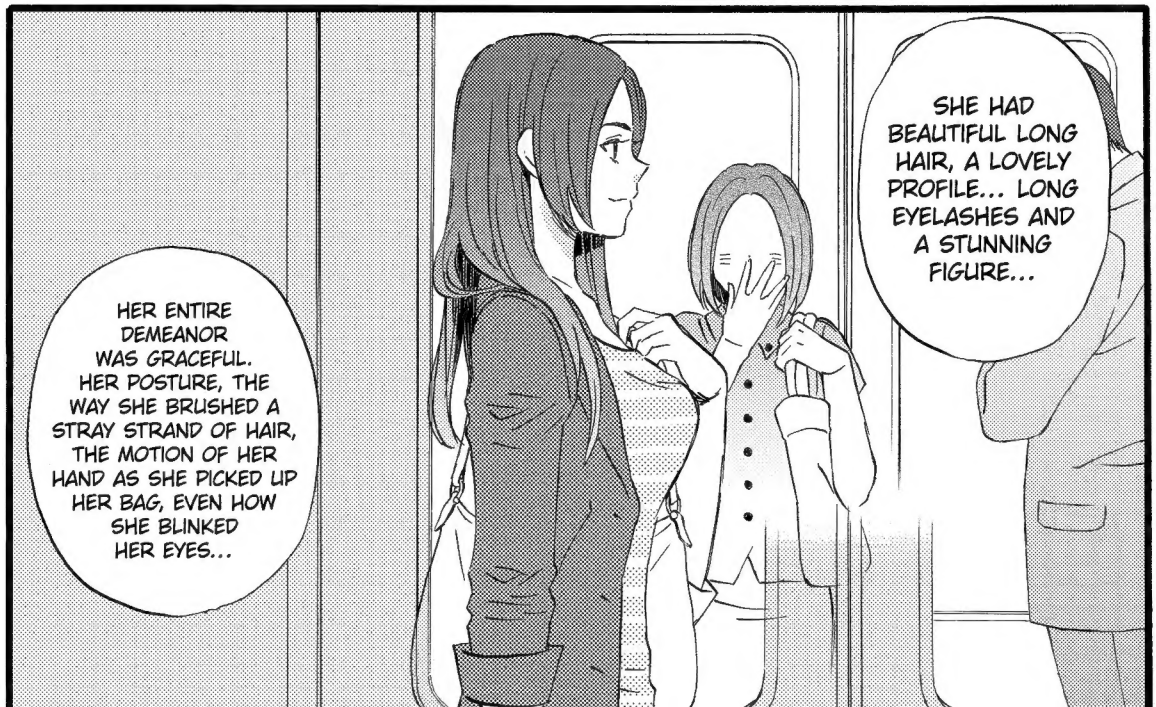

...OKAY. BUT, UM...
BUT SINCE THIS IS YOUR FIRST OFFENSE, I'LL LET IT SLIDE THIS TIME. GIVE ME YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS.
Clack

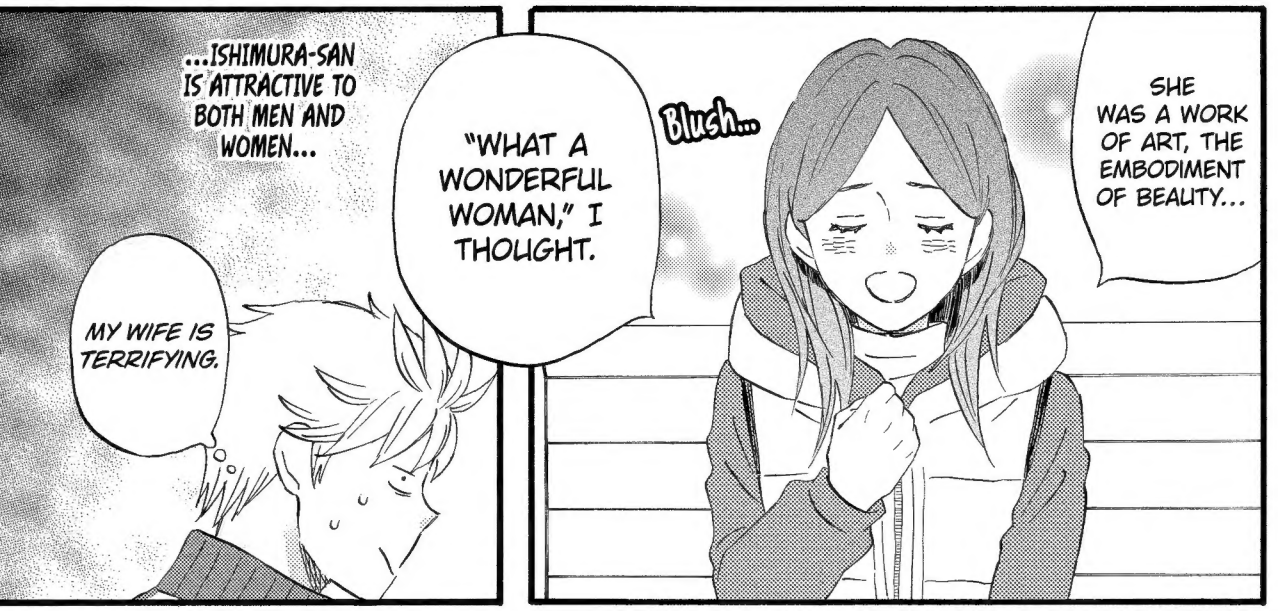
I'M NOT ACTUALLY A STUDENT...
Flip...
...
AN ADULT WOMAN?
YES.


WHY ON EARTH DID YOU DECIDE TO STALK ISHIMURA-SAN?
...I WAS AN OFFICE WORKER BEFORE I QUIT MY JOB.

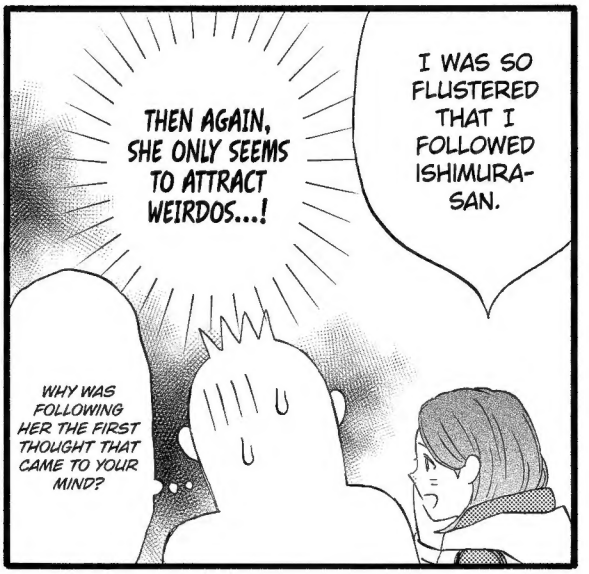
...SO, KAMIYA-SAN...


ONE DAY, I SAW ISHIMURA-SAMA ON THE TRAIN ON MY WAY HOME.
"ISHIMURA-SAMA," SHE SAID...


SHE HAD BEAUTIFUL LONG HAIR, A LOVELY PROFILE... LONG EYELASHES AND A STUNNING FIGURE...
HER ENTIRE DEMEANOR WAS GRACEFUL. HER POSTURE, THE WAY SHE BRUSHED A STRAY STRAND OF HAIR, THE MOTION OF HER HAND AS SHE PICKED UP HER BAG, EVEN HOW SHE BLINKED HER EYES...

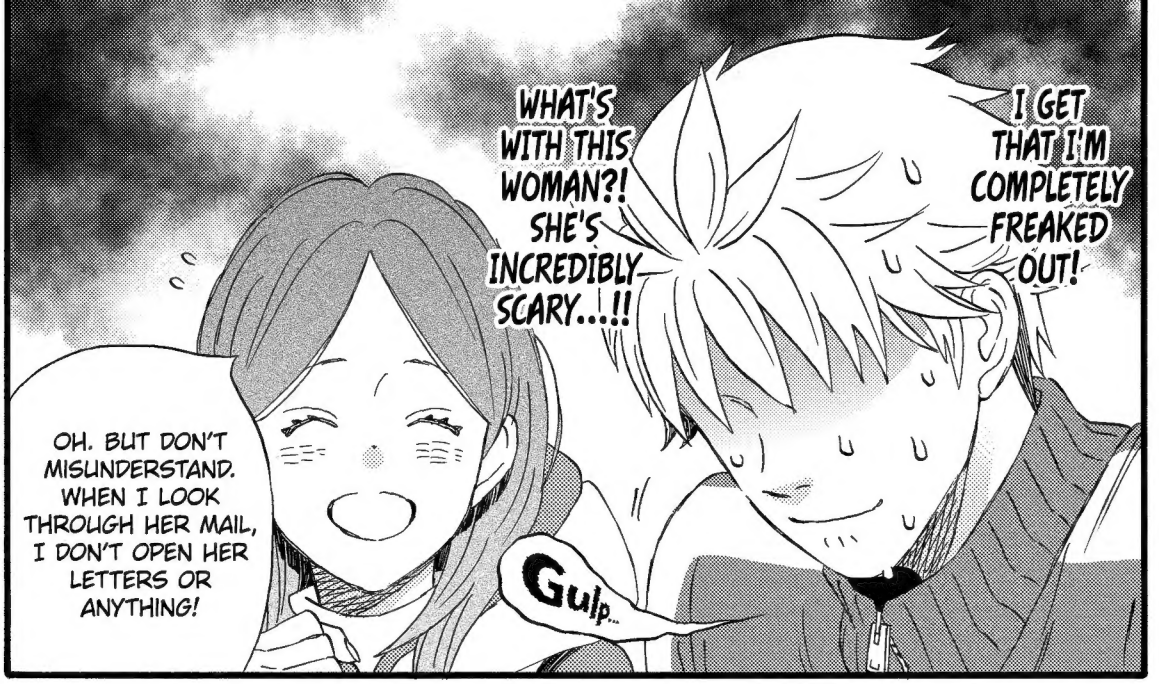

...ISHIMURA-SAN IS ATTRACTIVE TO BOTH MEN AND WOMEN...
"WHAT A WONDERFUL WOMAN," I THOUGHT.
MY WIFE IS TERRIFYING.
Blush...
SHE WAS A WORK OF ART, THE EMBODIMENT OF BEAUTY...

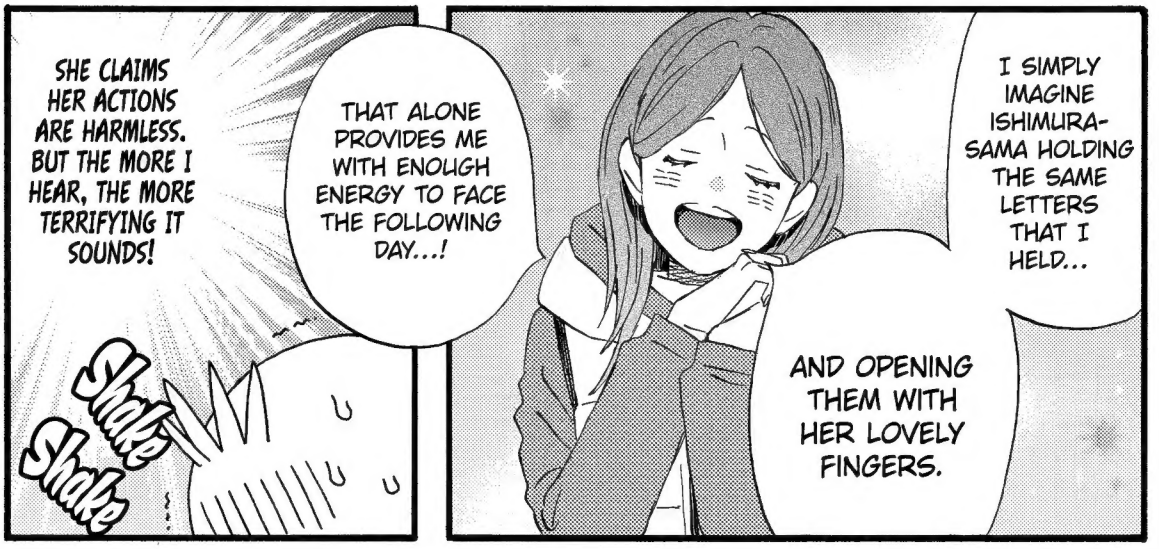
I WAS OVERJOYED WHEN I FOLLOWED HER TO HER HOUSE AND LEARNED HER NAME.
ISHIMURA
IT MADE ME WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT HER.

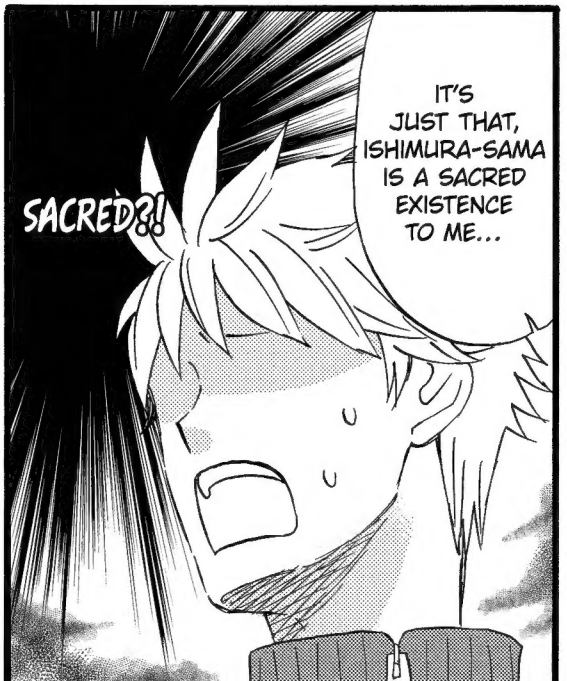

I WAS SO FLUSTERED THAT I FOLLOWED ISHIMURA-SAN.
THEN AGAIN, SHE ONLY SEEMS TO ATTRACT WEIRDOS...!
WHY WAS FOLLOWING HER THE FIRST THOUGHT THAT CAME TO YOUR MIND?

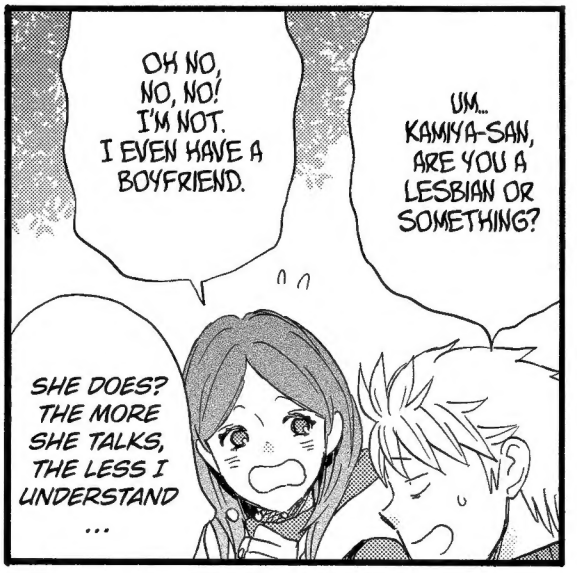
...I GET IT.
...

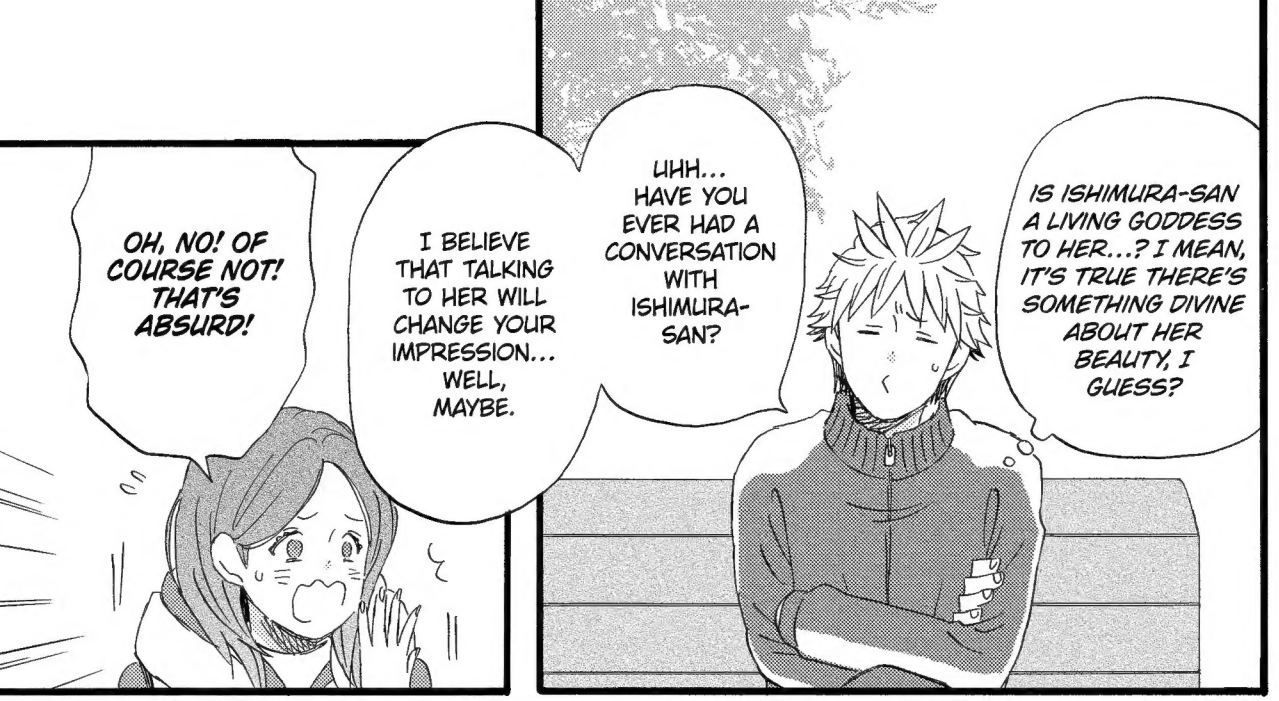
SO I OCCASIONALLY FOLLOW HER TO HER WORK. SINCE I DON'T HAVE ANY BUSINESS THERE, I SPEND MY TIME READING IN THE HOSPITAL'S WAITING ROOM.
I WISH TO BREATHE THE SAME AIR AS SHE DOES...
SO, EVERY NOW AND THEN... I LOOK THROUGH HER MAIL AND SECRETLY PHOTOGRAPH ISHIMURA-SAMA IN ORDER TO CREATE AN EXCLUSIVE PHOTO BOOK.

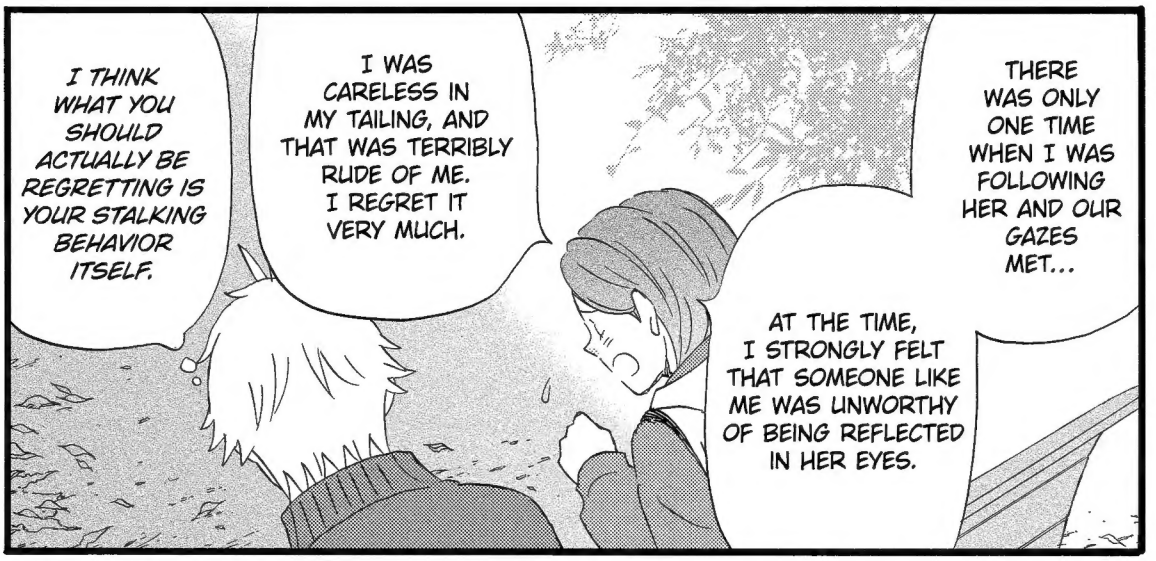

WHAT'S WITH THIS WOMAN?! SHE'S INCREDIBLY SCARY...!!
I GET THAT I'M COMPLETELY FREAKED OUT!
OH. BUT DON'T MISUNDERSTAND. WHEN I LOOK THROUGH HER MAIL, I DON'T OPEN HER LETTERS OR ANYTHING!
Gulp...


SHE CLAIMS HER ACTIONS ARE HARMLESS. BUT THE MORE I HEAR, THE MORE TERRIFYING IT SOUNDS!
THAT ALONE PROVIDES ME WITH ENOUGH ENERGY TO FACE THE FOLLOWING DAY...!
Shake Shake
I SIMPLY IMAGINE ISHIMURA-SAMA HOLDING THE SAME LETTERS THAT I HELD...
AND OPENING THEM WITH HER LOVELY FINGERS.

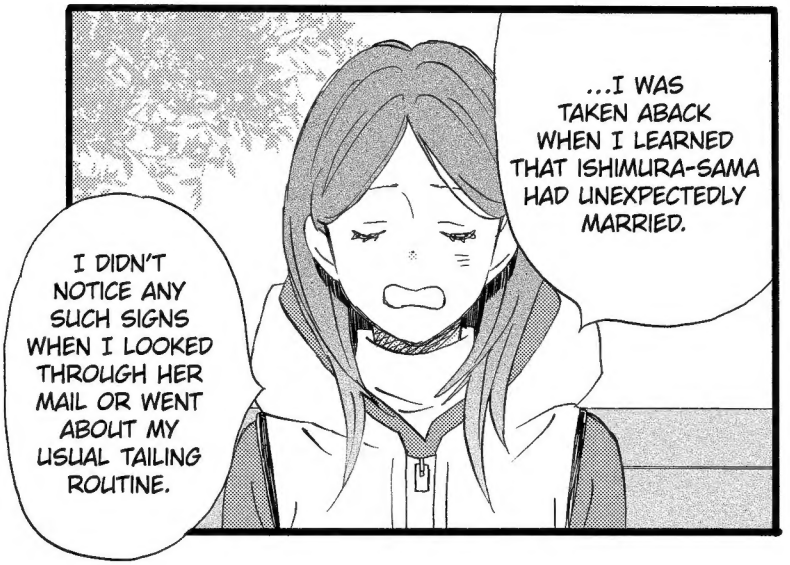

IT'S JUST THAT, ISHIMURA-SAMA IS A SACRED EXISTENCE TO ME...
SACRED?!


OH NO, NO, NO! I'M NOT. I EVEN HAVE A BOYFRIEND.
UM... KAMIYA-SAN, ARE YOU A LESBIAN OR SOMETHING?
SHE DOES? THE MORE SHE TALKS, THE LESS I UNDERSTAND ...


IS ISHIMURA-SAN A LIVING GODDESS TO HER...? I MEAN, IT'S TRUE THERE'S SOMETHING DIVINE ABOUT HER BEAUTY, I GUESS?
UHH... HAVE YOU EVER HAD A CONVERSATION WITH ISHIMURA-SAN?
I BELIEVE THAT TALKING TO HER WILL CHANGE YOUR IMPRESSION... WELL, MAYBE.
OH, NO! OF COURSE NOT! THAT'S ABSURD!

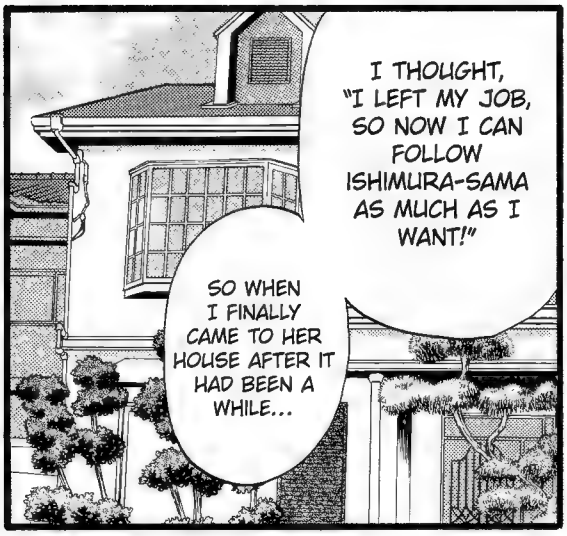

THERE WAS ONLY ONE TIME WHEN I WAS FOLLOWING HER AND OUR GAZES MET...
AT THE TIME, I STRONGLY FELT THAT SOMEONE LIKE ME WAS UNWORTHY OF BEING REFLECTED IN HER EYES.
I WAS CARELESS IN MY TAILING, AND THAT WAS TERRIBLY RUDE OF ME. I REGRET IT VERY MUCH.
I THINK WHAT YOU SHOULD ACTUALLY BE REGRETTING IS YOUR STALKING BEHAVIOR ITSELF.

SO, WHY DID YOU START FOLLOWING ME TOO?

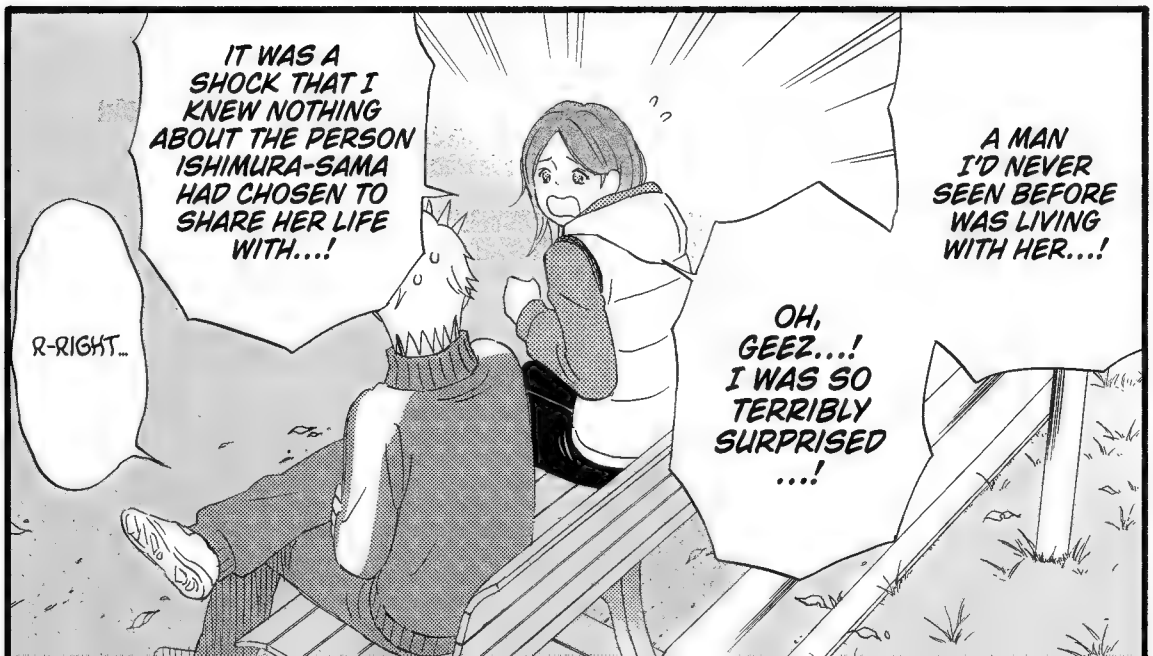

...I WAS TAKEN ABACK WHEN I LEARNED THAT ISHIMURA-SAMA HAD UNEXPECTEDLY MARRIED.
I DIDN'T NOTICE ANY SUCH SIGNS WHEN I LOOKED THROUGH HER MAIL OR WENT ABOUT MY USUAL TAILING ROUTINE.

BUT ISHIMURA-SAMA HERSELF DID NOT SEEM TO CARE ABOUT ANYONE IN PARTICULAR...
MANY PEOPLE ADORE ISHIMURA-SAMA, BOTH AT THE GYM AND IN HER POTTERY CLASS.
SHE REALLY KNOWS HER WELL...

ISHIMURA-SAMA DIDN'T SEEM TO CARE ABOUT HIM AT ALL...
I WAS AWARE THAT SHE HAD A COLLEAGUE AT THE HOSPITAL WHO HAS A SERIOUS INTEREST IN HER, BUT...


I THOUGHT, "I LEFT MY JOB, SO NOW I CAN FOLLOW ISHIMURA-SAMA AS MUCH AS I WANT!"
SO WHEN I FINALLY CAME TO HER HOUSE AFTER IT HAD BEEN A WHILE...

I BELIEVE THAT'S WHEN THE TWO OF YOU GOT MARRIED.
AFTER I QUIT MY JOB I HAD AN AWFULLY BUSY TIME TRAINING MY REPLACEMENT ...
WHICH MEANT I COULDN'T FOLLOW ISHIMURA-SAMA...


IT WAS A SHOCK THAT I KNEW NOTHING ABOUT THE PERSON ISHIMURA-SAMA HAD CHOSEN TO SHARE HER LIFE WITH...!
R-RIGHT...
A MAN I'D NEVER SEEN BEFORE WAS LIVING WITH HER...!
OH, GEEZ...! I WAS SO TERRIBLY SURPRISED ...!

I WAS IN SUCH A RUSH TO LEARN MORE ABOUT YOU THAT MY TAILING WAS VERY SLOPPY.

I'M SORRY IF I SCARED YOU.

THE APOLOGY IS APPRECIATED, BUT SHE'S STILL MISSING THE POINT...

MAYBE I'M MISUNDERSTANDING SOMETHING, BUT ISN'T THIS PERSON JUST APOLOGIZING FOR THE SLOPPY STALKING?

S-SO, HOW MUCH DID YOU LEARN ABOUT ME...?

RIGHT... I CAN'T SAY I'VE FIGURED OUT EVERYTHING ABOUT YOUR LIFE YET, BUT...

KIRISHIMA SHIROU, 25 YEARS OLD. WEST NIKOTAMA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL AND JUNIOR HIGHSCHOOL GRADUATE. CHIBA NANAMI HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATE. NORTH EIZAN UNIVERSITY GRADUATE.

AFTER WORKING FOR MARUI TEXTILE'S SALES DEPARTMENT FOR ONE YEAR AND EIGHT MONTHS, HE WAS LAID OFF DUE TO COMPANY CIRCUMSTANCES AND WAS OUT OF WORK FOR THREE MONTHS.

HE THEN MET ISHIMURA-SAMA AND HAS BEEN HER HOUSEHUSBAND FOR THE PAST EIGHT MONTHS.

HE GETS ALONG WELL WITH HIS NEIGHBORS AND APPEARS TO HAVE GAINED THEIR TRUST, PARTICULARLY THAT OF THE ELDERLY.

IT CAN BE SAID THAT HE HAS GROWN ACCUSTOMED TO LIVING IN THIS NEIGHBORHOOD.

HE'S RECENTLY BEEN INCORPORATING OLIVE OIL AND SEASONAL VEGETABLES INTO HIS COOKING ON A REGULAR BASIS...

BUT PERSONALLY, I WISH HE WOULD BROADEN HIS REPERTOIRE TO INCLUDE MORE JAPANESE DISHES, AS JAPANESE CUISINE IS ISHIMURA-SAMA'S FAVORITE.

RIGHT NOW, I WANT TO CONTACT HER FAMILY, ASK THEM TO PLACE HER IN A SUITABLE FACILITY AND ONLY RELEASE HER ONCE HER MENTAL ISSUES HAVE BEEN RESOLVED!

YEAH... AND YET, YOU STILL DON'T THINK THAT'S ENOUGH...

I'M AFRAID I ONLY KNOW THIS MUCH...

I WOULD HAVE TAKEN ACTION.

BUT YOU SEE, KIRISHIMA-SAN... IF I THOUGHT YOU WERE UNWORTHY OF BEING WITH ISHIMURA-SAMA...

...

A-ANYWAY, I NOW UNDERSTAND THAT YOU HAVE NO INTENTION OF CAUSING US HARM.

FOR THE TIME BEING, I MUST STOP HER FROM STALKING ISHIMURA-SAN AND ME.

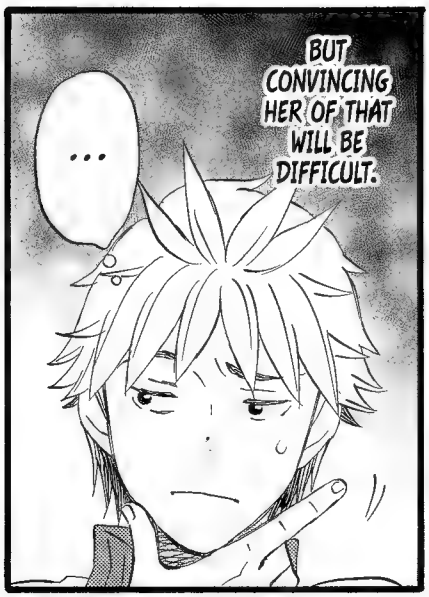
HA HA HA...

Heh heh heh...

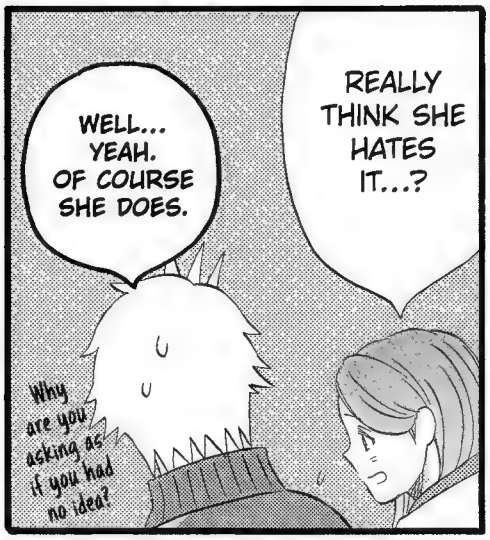
I'M GLAD YOU'RE A SURPRISINGLY GOOD PERSON ♡

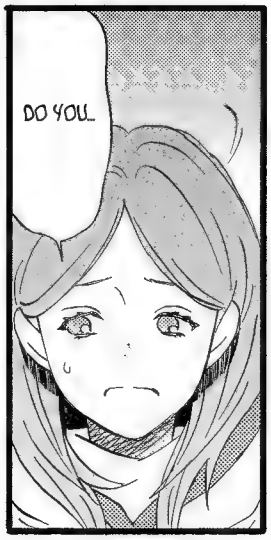
I WAS SKEPTICAL OF YOU AT FIRST BECAUSE YOU APPEARED SHALLOW, BUT...

CAN I BE FRANK WITH YOU?
INSTEAD OF STALKING ISHIMURA-SAN, DON'T YOU THINK YOU SHOULD SPEND THAT TIME WITH YOUR BOYFRIEND?
AFTER ALL... TRACKING ISHIMURA'S MOVEMENTS SERVES ABSOLUTELY NO PURPOSE, DOES IT?
OH, BUT IT DOES!
I'M HOPING THAT ONE DAY I'LL BE ABLE TO PERSUADE MY BOYFRIEND TO JOIN ME IN STALKING ISHIMURA-SAMA...
IT'S LIKE THEY'RE FANS CHASING AN IDOL...
-sama...
I-Ishimura...
Ishimura-samaa!
ISHIMURA
ISHIMURA-SAMA'S LOVE
YOUR HEART SEEMS FAR FROM PURE, THOUGH...
IT PURIFIES MY HEART EVERY TIME...!!
THAT'S... ALL THE MORE REASON FOR YOU TO STOP STALKING US, DON'T YOU THINK?
...
YOU SEE, I'M GETTING MARRIED SOON.
HEH HEH...
W-Whoa...
MY CONDOLENCES TO THE BOYFRIEND...


...
BUT CONVINCING HER OF THAT WILL BE DIFFICULT.

I WON'T BE SLOPPY WITH MY TAILING ANYMORE! I PROMISE I WON'T MAKE YOU FEEL UNCOMFORTABLE ABOUT IT AGAIN!
H-HMM...
YOUR SLOPPY TAILING ISN'T THE ISSUE HERE...


REALLY THINK SHE HATES IT...?
WELL... YEAH. OF COURSE SHE DOES.
Why are you asking as if you had no idea?


DO YOU...

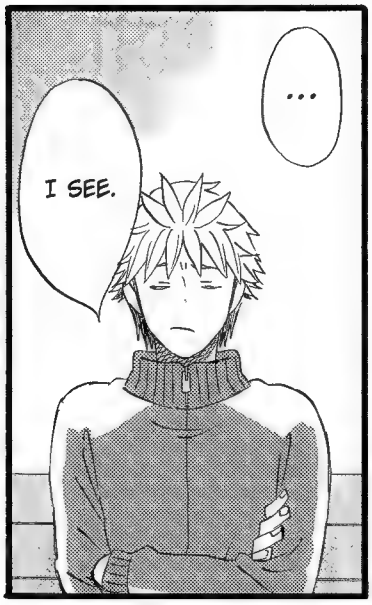
EVEN THOUGH ISHIMURA-SAN HATES IT?
...!
Ah!

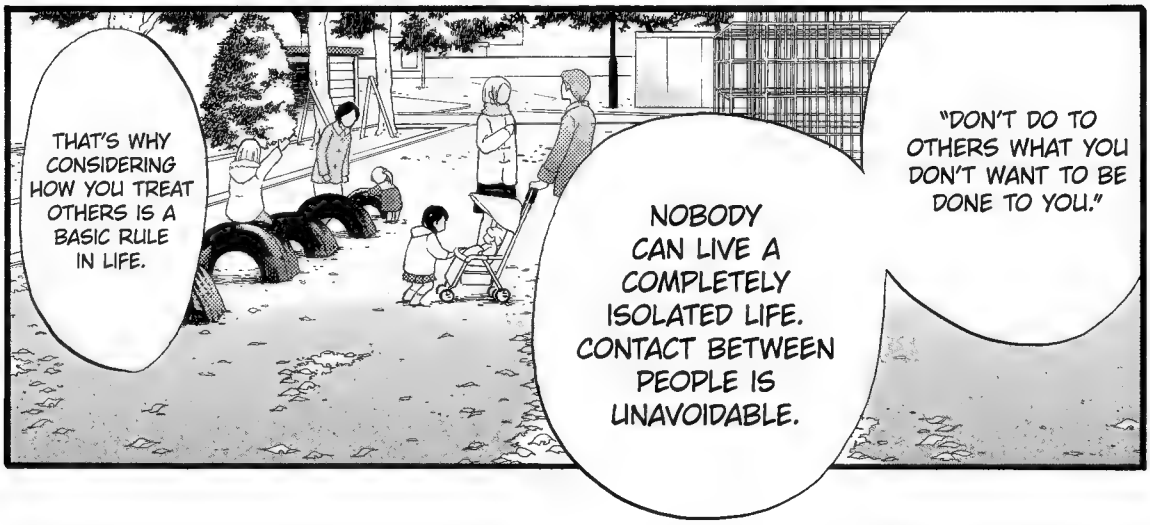
I'M NOT A BAD STALKER...!!
SO THERE ARE GOOD AND BAD STALKERS?

IT SEEMS THAT SHE'S HAD TROUBLE WITH STALKERS NUMEROUS TIMES BEFORE...
BUT...!

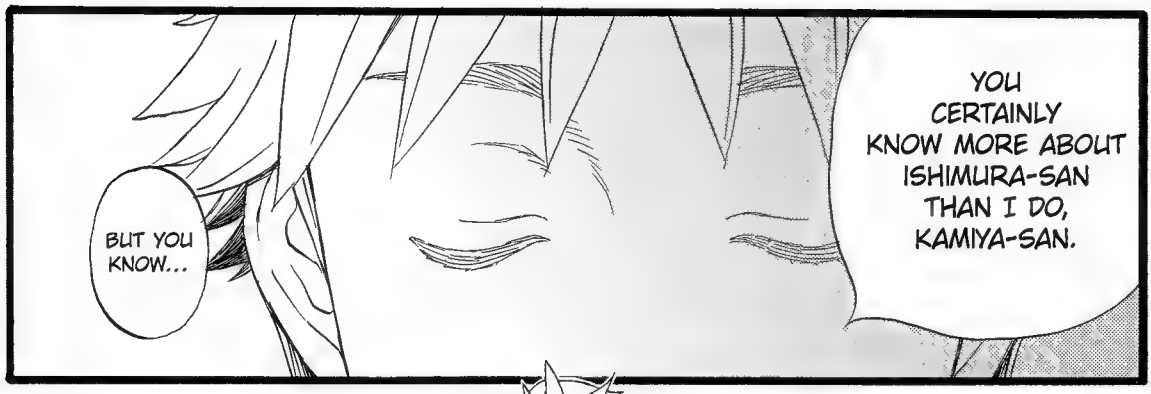
I MEAN NO OFFENSE, BUT I KNOW MORE ABOUT ISHIMURA-SAMA THAN YOU DO, KIRISHIMA-SAN!
I ONLY WISH FOR ISHIMURA'S HAPPINESS. IN FACT, I ALWAYS PRAY FOR IT AS I WATCH OVER HER!

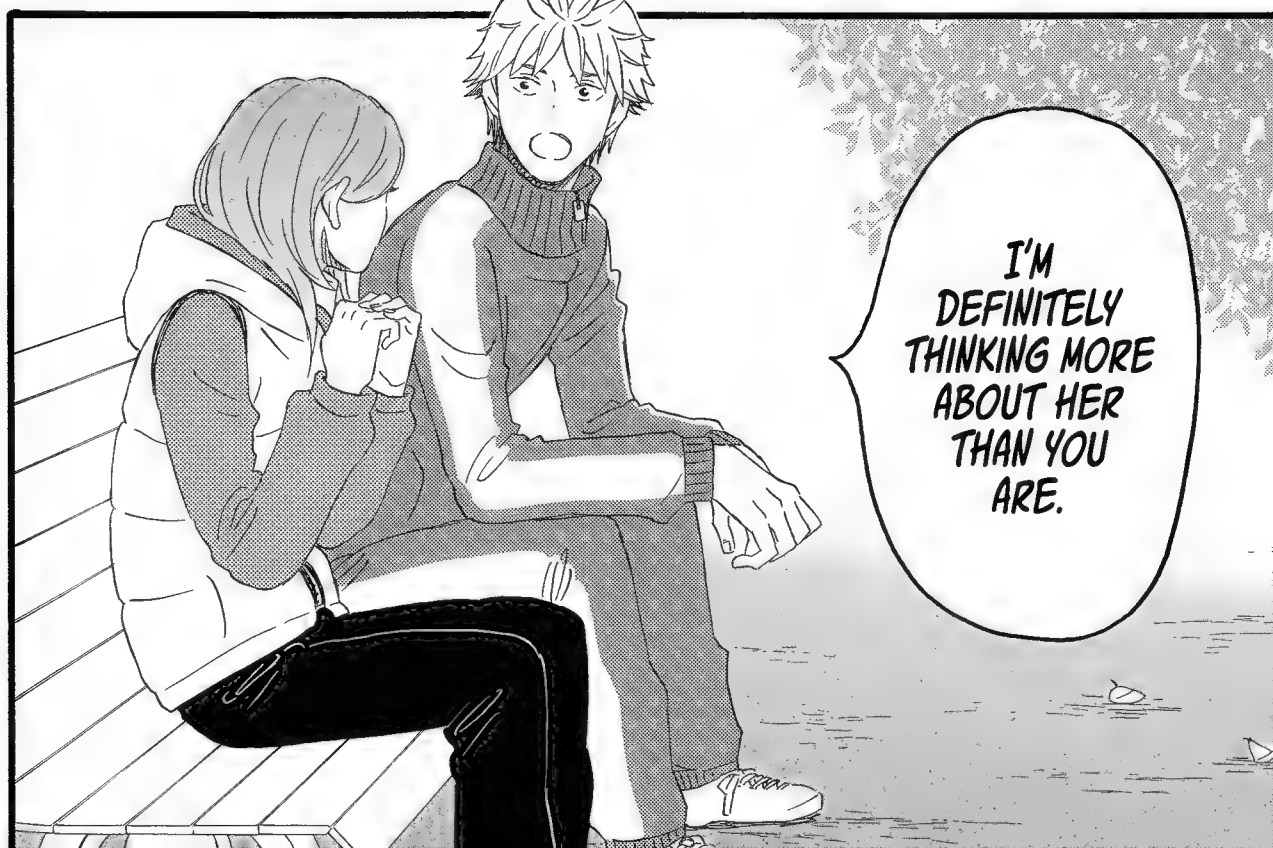
HUH...?
KAMIYA-SAN, YOU HAVE BEEN FOLLOWING, INVESTIGATING, AND LOOKING THROUGH SOMEONE ELSE'S MAIL WITHOUT THEIR PERMISSION...
WOULD YOU BE OKAY IF THE SAME THING WAS DONE TO YOU?


...
I SEE.


THAT'S WHY CONSIDERING HOW YOU TREAT OTHERS IS A BASIC RULE IN LIFE.
NOBODY CAN LIVE A COMPLETELY ISOLATED LIFE. CONTACT BETWEEN PEOPLE IS UNAVOIDABLE.
"DON'T DO TO OTHERS WHAT YOU DON'T WANT TO BE DONE TO YOU."

IF YOU GET MARRIED, KAMIYA-SAN, YOU'LL LIVE TOGETHER WITH YOUR HUSBAND AND YOU'LL BECOME A BIGGER PART OF HIS LIFE.
THAT'S WHEN YOU'LL REALIZE HOW IMPORTANT THESE BASIC RULES ARE.
...BUT...


YOU CERTAINLY KNOW MORE ABOUT ISHIMURA-SAN THAN I DO, KAMIYA-SAN.
BUT YOU KNOW...


I'M DEFINITELY THINKING MORE ABOUT HER THAN YOU ARE.

I WANT TO PROTECT ISHIMURA-SAN.

SO IF MY WORDS ARE USELESS TO CONVINCE YOU...

I'LL HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO CONTACT YOUR PARENTS ABOUT THIS.

YOU MAY THINK THAT YOU'RE NOT BOTHERING ANYONE WITH YOUR ACTIONS, BUT...

YOU SHOULD BE AWARE THAT YOUR ACTIONS ARE RISKY, AND IT WON'T BE GOOD IF YOU'RE CAUGHT IN THE ACT ONE DAY.

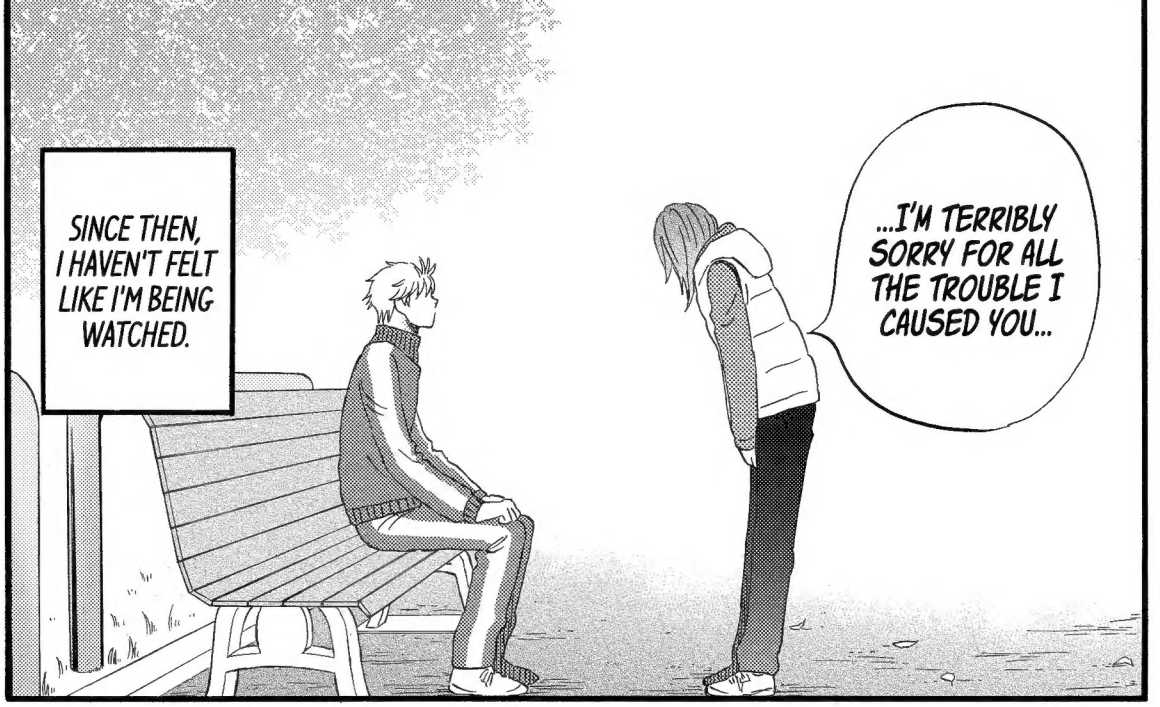
...!

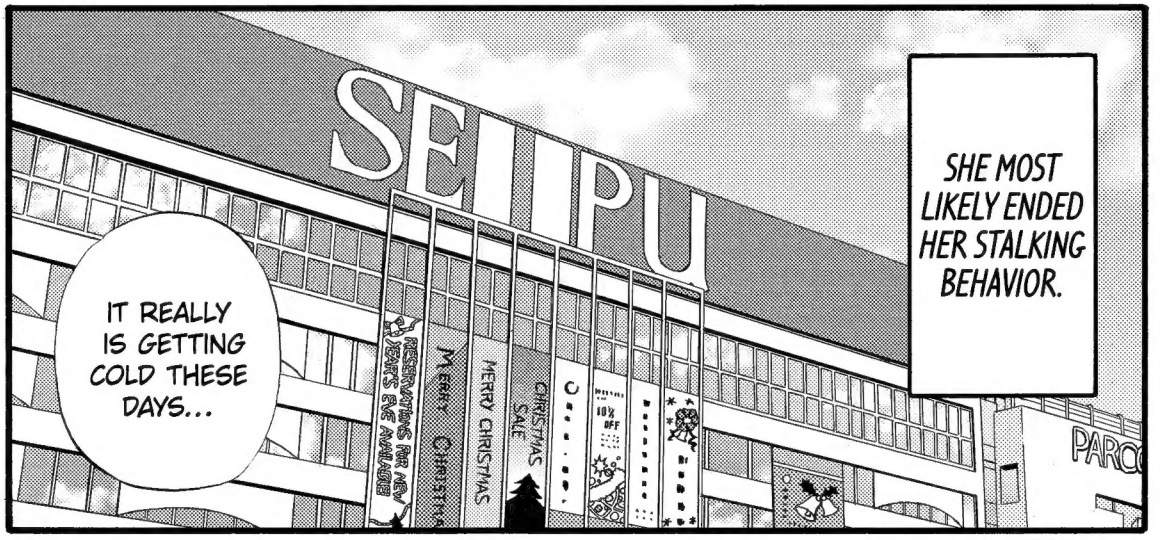
...

ISHIMURA-SAMA TRULY MARRIED A WONDERFUL PERSON...

Get up...

HM...?

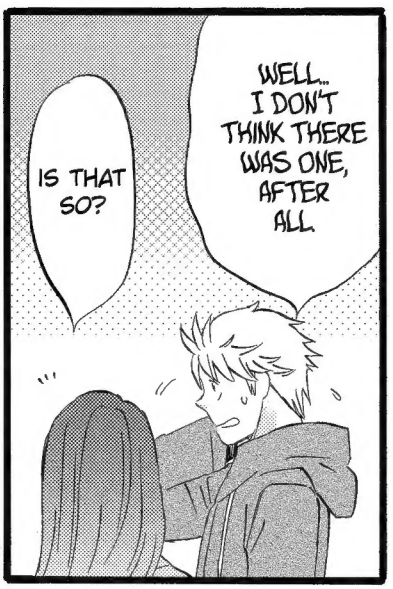

SINCE THEN, I HAVEN'T FELT LIKE I'M BEING WATCHED.
...I'M TERRIBLY SORRY FOR ALL THE TROUBLE I CAUSED YOU...

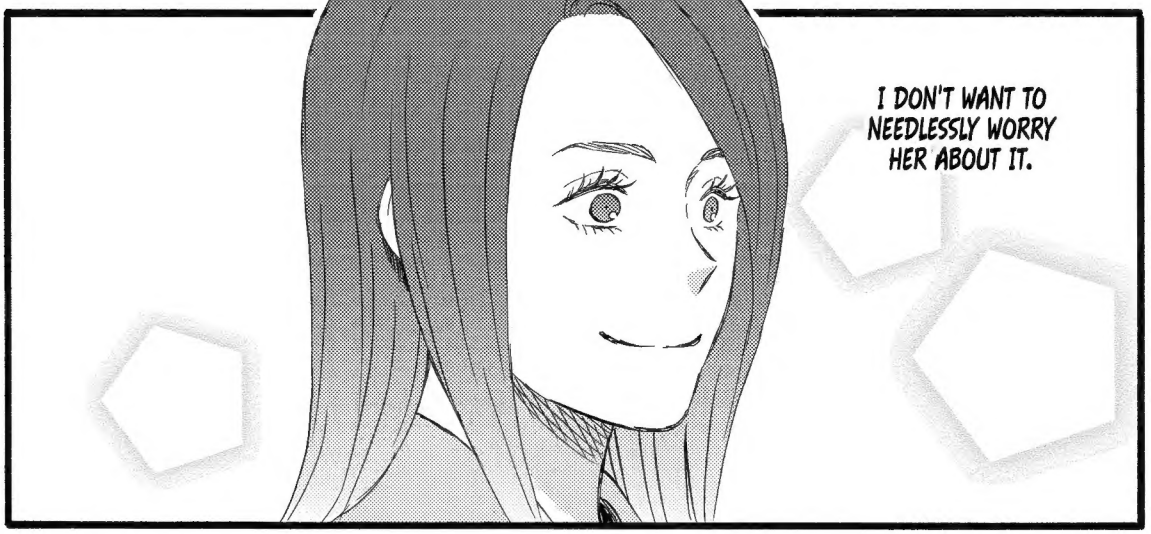

SEIPU
SHE MOST LIKELY ENDED HER STALKING BEHAVIOR.
IT REALLY IS GETTING COLD THESE DAYS...
RESERVATIONS FOR NEW YEAR'S EVE AVAILABLE
MERRY CHRISTMAS
CHRISTMAS SALE
PARCO

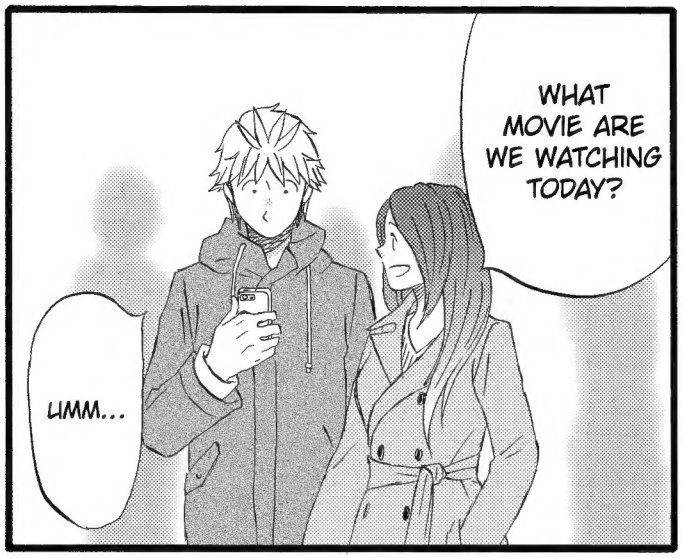
OH, RIGHT. HOW DID THINGS GO WITH THE STALKER?
HM?

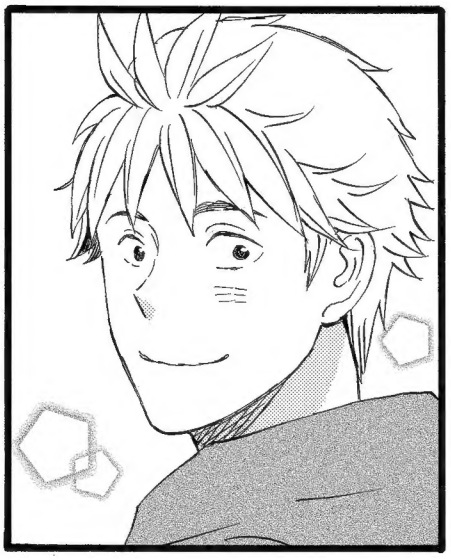
A BIT EARLY FOR THAT, ISN'T IT? IT'S ONLY DECEMBER.
I HOPE IT GETS WARMER SOON...

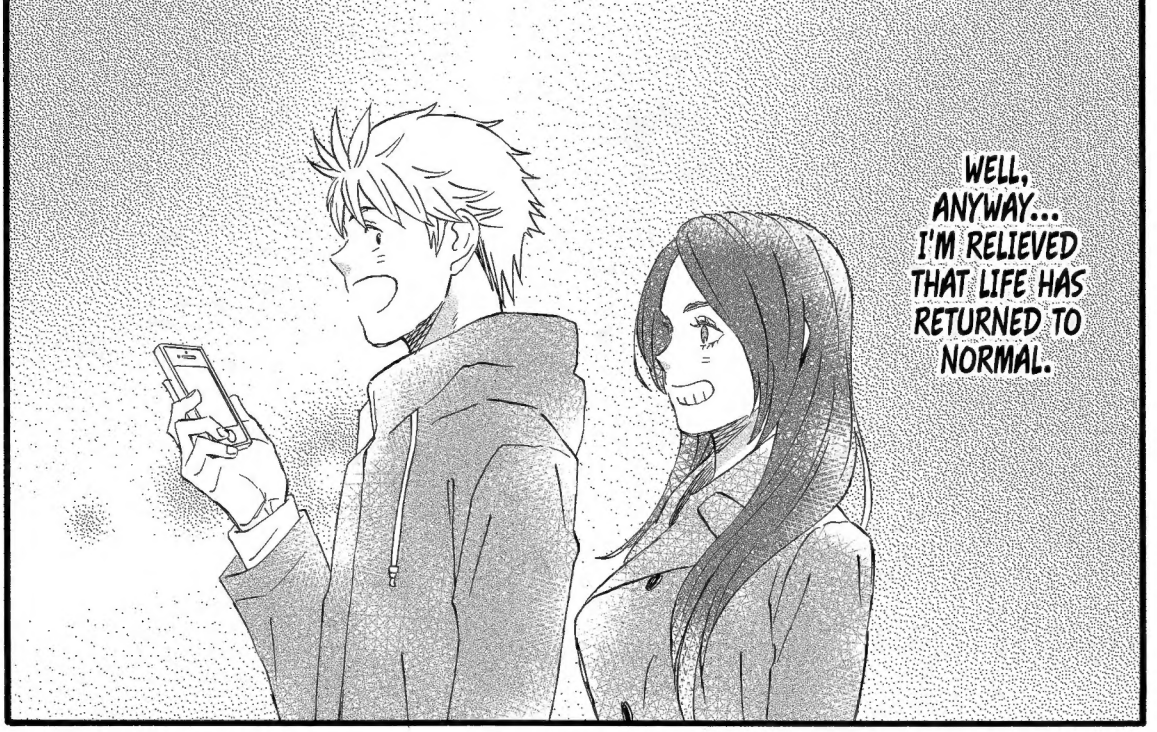
IF SHE'S UNAWARE OF THE STALKER CASE, IT'S AS IF IT NEVER HAPPENED.
KAMIYA-SAN HAS STOPPED THE STALKING, SO I GUESS I DON'T NEED TO TELL ISHIMURA-SAN ABOUT IT.

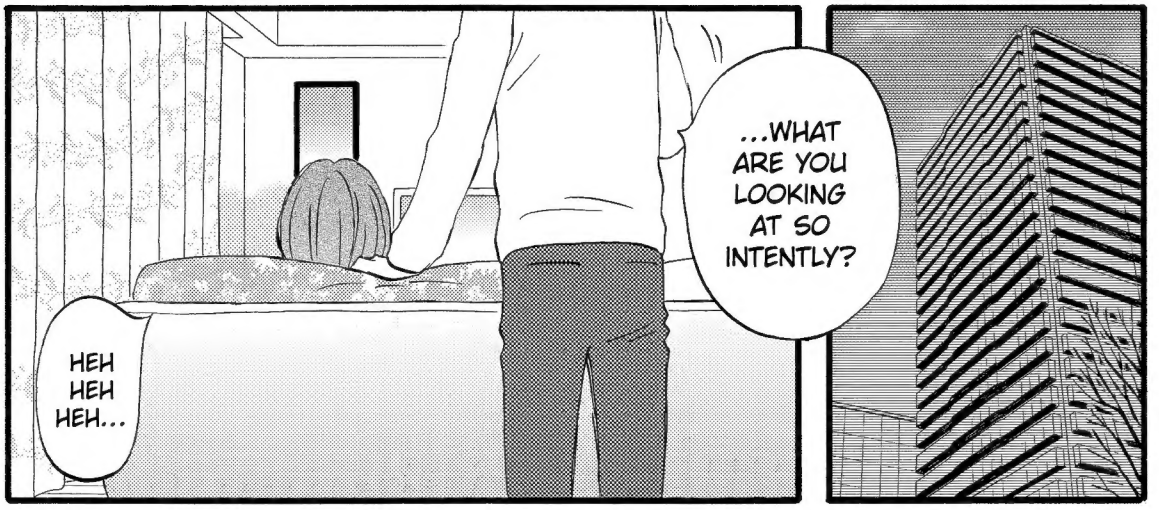

WELL... I DON'T THINK THERE WAS ONE, AFTER ALL.
IS THAT SO?

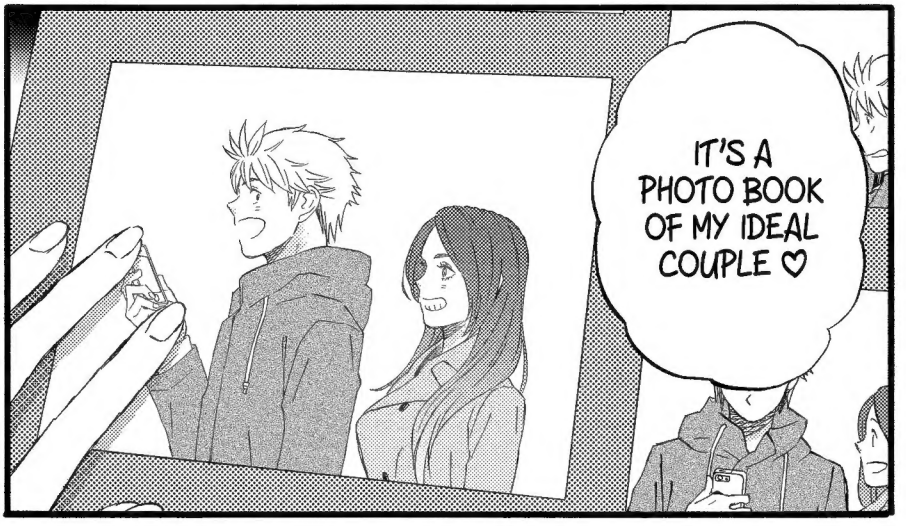

I DON'T WANT TO NEEDLESSLY WORRY HER ABOUT IT.


WHAT MOVIE ARE WE WATCHING TODAY?
UMM...




WELL, ANYWAY... I'M RELIEVED THAT LIFE HAS RETURNED TO NORMAL.


...WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING AT SO INTENTLY?
HEH HEH HEH...


IT'S A PHOTO BOOK OF MY IDEAL COUPLE ♡